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STATE SUPERINTENDENT

State Board of Education Statement on HB 5923

The State Board of Education (SBE) is committed to fashioning an education system that is performance-driven and improves learning and educational outcomes for all students. We also are firmly committed to all parents and children having high quality choices for their education that meet their individual needs. However, we have significant concerns that HB5923, as written, is not the method for improving education outcomes for Michigan's students.

HB5923 does not provide needed limitations and regulations on the number and nature of new schools and learning options that can be created, including new on-line schools, for profit-run schools, schools run by businesses, universities, community organizations, and municipal governments. Without necessary guidelines and expectations for high quality education outcomes, HB5923 would allow new authorizers to create schools in any location, for any reason with little oversight.

The legislation as written does not include components we consider necessary for effective reform legislation:

- An analysis of how these new schools will contribute to overall improvement in quality of learning and outcomes for Michigan students;
- Guidelines to target new schools where there is the greatest need for education choices, based on current student performance outcomes in area schools;
- Defined expectations that new schools will provide similar or better education for enrolled students than existing area schools, including requiring minimum qualifications for authorizers and school managers based on credible expectations of outcomes.
- Consideration of the impact, financial and otherwise, on the existing public school system of the creation of this marketplace for education.

In addition, the SBE has significant concerns about the pace of development of compounding education reform legislation. Over the past three years, several education reform bills have been implemented. It's important to give these options time to work and evaluate the outcomes before implementing additional legislation. We anticipate that the proposed new school variants will require public resources that could have a significant impact on the maintenance, performance, and ability to improve existing public schools.

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We believe that new choices in education delivery must be considered in the context of a coherent strategy for improving educational performance and outcomes for Michigan students—a strategy the State Board has supported in the past, and is prepared to help inform for the future.

The State Board of Education opposes House Bill 5923, as written.

Approved November 20, 2012